

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

Student and Exchange Visitor Program

SEVP Draft Policy Guidance for Adjudicators 1003-03: Instructional Site Reporting and Management

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1. Purpose/Background.

To better ensure that F and M students maintain nonimmigrant status, the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) must know any physical location at which an F or M student can receive instruction (see *8 CFR 214.3(a)(1)*). Historically, school officials have provided information about campus locations as part of SEVP requirements for certification.

In 2008, SEVP sought to have more explicit identification of locations of instruction and introduced the term “instructional site.” The scope of the original definition of this term has caused confusion. This guidance provides a clearer definition of instructional site.

Since then, SEVP has directed school officials to identify all instructional sites, as defined in 2.1, in their Form I-17, “Petition for Approval of School for Attendance by Nonimmigrant Student.”

This guidance limits requirements for the identification of instructional sites by public schools and schools with U.S. Department of Education (ED)-recognized accreditation.

2. Definitions.

- 2.1. Instructional Site.** An instructional site is any physical location where instruction or training is provided, or that supports activities related to instruction or training (e.g., research or laboratory exercises) for F and/or M students. The term “instructional site” incorporates all terms for describing this type of entity (e.g., campus, satellite, auxiliary, coordinate, extension, off-campus, regional, other).
- 2.2 Main Instructional Site.** The main instructional site is the first instructional site listed in SEVIS. The main instructional site must have governance over and have the same bona fides as subordinate instructional sites included in the Form I-17.
- 2.3. School.** A school is one or more instructional sites where an F or M student can complete a program of study and that has one or more teachers, administrators, buildings, enrolled students, a defined curriculum, and clear processes for measuring educational progress in learning. Schools with more than one instructional site may have different elements of what constitutes a school spread throughout the different instructional sites. Schools with only one instructional site must have all these elements at that instructional site.

- 2.4 School System.** A school system, as used by SEVP, is more than one school that is a centralized, legally established administrative entity, has the same governance and/or bona fides (e.g., accreditation) and is SEVP-certified as a single entity. A petition by a school system must include, with the supporting documents, a list of the names and addresses of those schools included in the petition (see *8 CFR 214.3(a)(1)(i)*).

Note: An individual school that is part of a system (e.g., a district or diocese) may choose to apply independently for SEVP certification, not included in the petition submitted by school system officials.

- 3. Policy.** Public schools and/or schools accredited by ED-recognized accrediting agencies must report on the school's Form I-17 the petitioning instructional site, all instructional sites where an F or M student can receive 51% or more of a program of study, and the location(s) where student records are maintained.

Officials at all other schools must report all instructional sites on the Form I-17. Designated school officials (DSOs) at all schools, regardless, must maintain records on all instructional sites and provide the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) with this information upon request by a DHS official.

4. Procedures/Requirements.

4.1 Instructional Site Reporting Requirements.

- 4.1.1 Schools with ED-Recognized Accreditation¹ and/or Public Schools.** DSOs of SEVP-certified schools must submit and maintain SEVIS school information (see *8 CFR 214.3(f)(1)* and *(h)(3)*) for the petitioning instructional site, and all instructional sites where an F or M student can receive 51% or more of a program of study, and the location(s) where school officials maintain student records. Changes to SEVIS campus information on any of these instructional sites require SEVP adjudication.

Normally, SEVP-certified schools have 21 days to report school information updates in SEVIS (see *8 CFR 214.3(g)(2)*). However, a DHS official may direct DSOs of an SEVP-certified school that has ED-recognized accreditation and/or is a public school to submit or update SEVIS campus information for any or all instructional sites where an F or M student can receive any portion of a program of study, as well as the location(s) where officials maintain student records. When directed by DHS, DSOs must respond to this request within 10 business days of the request (see *8 CFR 214.3(h)(3)(ii)*).

- 4.1.2 All Other Schools.** DSOs of SEVP-certified schools must submit and maintain school information in SEVIS (see *8 CFR 214.3(f)(1)* and *(h)(3)*) for all instructional sites. Any change to SEVIS information on any instructional site requires SEVP adjudication.

- 4.1.3 Other Requirements.** The instructional site whose officials are submitting the initial petition is the main site (the first instructional site listed in SEVIS).

¹ A list of ED-recognized accrediting agencies is available for review [here](#).

- 1) The main instructional site must have governance over and have the same bona fides as subordinate instructional sites included in the petition.
- 2) The main instructional site is legally liable for compliance related to SEVP-certification by all school employees and at all school instructional sites.

4.2 Site Visit Fees.

4.2.1 Initial Certification.

- 1) All schools submitting an initial petition for SEVP certification must receive a site visit. SEVP will charge a fee of \$655 for each instructional site, up to four, included on an initial petition for SEVP certification for all sites within 25 miles of the main site. There will be no added charge for more than four instructional sites.
- 2) SEVP will charge an additional \$655 for each instructional site at a distance of 25 miles or more from the main site that would require another visit.
- 3) DHS has discretion to visit all instructional sites during a site visit.

4.2.2 Out-of-Cycle Reviews.

- 1) DHS has discretion to conduct an “on-site review” of any instructional site of any SEVP-certified school at any time.
- 2) No fee will be charged for on-site review.

4.2.3 Updates and Recertification.

SEVP will not charge a fee for schools whose officials submit updates to their Form I-17 regarding instructional sites prior to submitting their recertification petition. However, SEVP has the discretion to still require a site visit. Schools whose officials submit such updates to the Form I-17 after submitting their recertification petition must receive a site visit and pay a fee of \$655.

4.3 DSO Coverage of Instructional Sites. An office is not required for a DSO at each instructional site of a school. However, a DSO (which includes the principal designated school official (PDSO)), must have an office located somewhere on school property to which all F and/or M students have reasonable access (see *8 CFR 214.3(l)*). Note the following:

- 1) The head of the school must appoint a PDSO and provide coverage for each instructional site in SEVIS.
- 2) An individual may be appointed as PDSO for more than one instructional site.
- 3) A PDSO may assign other DSOs to any instructional site where he or she is appointed.

5. Responsibilities. None.

6. Authorities/References.

6.1 *8 U.S.C. 1356(m).*

6.2 *8 CFR 103.7(b)(1)(ii)(B).*

6.3 *8 CFR 214.3.*

7. **Attachments.** None.

8. **Scope and Use.** This SEVP Draft Policy Guidance for Adjudicators applies to and is binding on all SEVP employees. It is intended solely for the guidance of SEVP personnel in the performance of their official duties. It is not intended to, does not, and may not be relied upon to create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or by any individual or other party in litigation with the United States, or in any other form or manner. Until issued in final form, this draft Policy Guidance for Adjudicators does not constitute SEVP policy in any way or for any purpose.

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